3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

593 desire to urinate overcame him and being drowsy he wetted the mat.
863 His father saw this and flew into a rage. 'You, a big lad, and you do this,' he stormed. 'You yourself will wipe the mat with your body'; and he commanded the child to roll in the urine so as to wipe it up. 'I wept', said Naabdiya, 'and I was afraid, but I began to roll in the urine. Then my mother cried out to my father to leave me alone. "Do you want to kill the child? (she cried) I suffered to bear a child and you want to kill him. I myself will wipe it up." But my father did not allow her to do it. A woman's heart is soft because she has borne the child. Thus my father taught me wisdom (*paalem yam*).' The moral drawn by Naabdiya needs no comment.

593 The other story shows the strength of paternal authority and the degree to which a boy of 10 or 11 has become imbued with the values of his culture. The boy is Yindol, the first-born son of Zaŋ. In 1936 his father went to Kumasi for some months. Before leaving he put aside a small quantity of grain for the family's needs and gave orders that on no account should anybody go into the granary to take any more grain until his return. The supplies he had put aside were soon exhausted. With the help of small gifts from her kinsfolk his wife managed to scrape a meal every other day for her three children. She herself lived almost entirely off wild vegetables which she cooked to supplement the children's porridge. But though they were practically starving neither she nor Yindol would go to the granary, because, as Yindol said when he told me of their plight, Zaŋ had forbidden it, and in any case he, as a first-born, could not go into his father's granary. Why did his mother not ask her husband's brother to get her some grain from Zaŋ's granary? I asked. 'Oh no', said the boy, speaking as if he were the head of the house in his father's absence, 'she dare not do that. Besides, we shall need that grain for the farming season.'

593 But at the same time as the child is learning to take the authority of his father for granted and fitting himself into the configuration of
●866 domestic relations, a contrary process is emerging. This process springs from the psychological and social cleavage that underlies the strong ties of duty, affection, and common interest between parents and children, the universal cleavage between successive generations. The structure of the family gives this process its form; and it is expressed through the economic organization and in ritual values. The 12-year-old is becoming differentiated as a person in his or her own right. Indeed, with boys this process commences at an earlier age, and its first sign is a small boy's refusing to sleep in his mother's room. Girls often continue to sleep with their mother until they are approaching puberty, unless there is a grandmother in the house; then they will go to sleep with her when they are about 6 or 7. A boy, however, is ridiculed by his playmates if he still sleeps in his mother's room after the age of 7 or 8. Generally boys of that age sleep with a grandparent or with the older boys in their

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

doo, the room specially set aside for the boys of the homestead to sleep in. Tale ideas of propriety come into this. If a woman has children over the age of about 3 sleeping with her and her husband wants to come to her, he will order the children to go and sleep in another room. Older children are said to know that they must leave the room for the night when their father comes to their mother. Tallensi are horrified at the suggestion that children who 'have sense' might witness sexual relations between their parents.

As we have mentioned, a boy of about 12 is generally able to help his mother with the cultivation of her ground-nut plot, the produce of which is entirely at her own disposal. He often has a small ground-nut plot of his own and the produce of it belongs to him. He may, for instance, sell his ground-nuts for a few pence in order to buy himself a loin-cloth. Or he may prefer to keep them; and then he will store them in one of his mother's store-pots. He may have a hen of his own, too, as we have observed, and its eggs, or any chickens he succeeds in breeding from them, belong to him. Now it is very unusual for a boy to be given this first start in animal husbandry by his father. For he already has a share in his father's property. He will contribute to its acquisition by his labour, and he will one day, as the natives always emphasize, inherit it. A boy gets his first hen from his mother or from one of his matrilateral kinsmen, most commonly his maternal grandfather (*yaab*) or uncle (*ahɔb*), but sometimes his father's *ahɔb* or some other kinsman of that class. This is a quasi-paternal gesture on the part of the maternal uncle knitting his ties with his sister's son more closely. Many a Talən can point with pride to a cow which he bought with the proceeds of selling goats and sheep of his own breeding, the first of which was bought with the money he had saved from selling chickens bred from the hen his uncle gave him. And when the cow gets old he is obliged to take it to his mother's brother to be sacrificed to the latter's lineage *bɔyar* as a thank-offering.

The significant point, here, is that a boy begins to act and feel as a social personality in his own right in economic terms and in opposition to his patrilineal line. His self-differentiation is a function of his matrilateral kinship, correlated with the antithesis between the *dug* and the *yir* in the structure of the joint family. Their childhood attempts at animal husbandry may be the first stage in the economic differentiation of sons of the same man by different mothers; and it is this that leads, at a later stage of the lineage cycle, to their separation. When that time comes it is a common thing for a man to 'beg' (*soh*) land, to build on and farm, from his maternal uncle. The gift of a hen is repeated at a higher economic level in a form appropriate to the nephew's wants and maturity.[1]

The economic self-differentiation of a son is both a sign of his psycho-

[1] Cf. below, Ch. XI.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

The economic self-differentiation is both a sign of his psycho-

logical and social self-differentiation from his father and a stimulus to it. 866 ● Naturally it results in conflict at times.[1] For example, Kpana-Tee took his grandson, a boy of about 14, to live with him because the boy had 593 quarrelled with his father, Kpana-Tee's oldest son, who was farming on 578 his own in one of the peripheral settlements. The youngster had two hens which he had bred from a hen given to him by his *alɔb*. He wanted to sell one in order to buy a loin-cloth for the Gɔlib Festival. His father said this was extravagance and forbade it. But the boy, supported by his mother, insisted that he could do what he liked with his 'things' (*bon*). This angered his father so much that he thrashed him. Thereupon the boy ran away to his grandfather, who took his part, and told him not to go back home for the present. As a man grows older the chances of such conflicts due to the clash between paternal authority and filial self-determination increase and are only kept in check by the sanctions of filial piety.

The process of incipient self-differentiation at this stage is distinctive 866 of boys. It does not occur with girls before pubescence. Until that stage their relations with their parents continue to have a more childish stamp 593 than is the case with their brothers. Whereas a 10-year-old boy would be ashamed to be found hanging round his mother when she is busy in the kitchen, a 10-year-old girl still enjoys sitting among the infants listening to her father in conversation with other men at the *zanɔne*. One notices that little girls of about this age are more quiet and docile than boys. Attached as they are to their mothers, they do not yet show that diffidence towards their fathers in public which another two or three years will bring. They do not feel the weight of the father's authority yet, beyond the ordinary discipline he exercises over their manners and habits. But there is a rapid change as they get nearer to puberty and at the same time become more proficient in women's work and more absorbed in the social world of the women. A 12-year-old girl shows more respect to her father in public than her brother does. Like her mother she will always stoop or crouch to greet a male visitor of her father's or when she is offering her father food. With her mother she is to all appearances on intimate and friendly, almost sisterly, terms. She may still be sleeping with her mother, especially if the latter is past child-bearing age.

Between the age of about 7 and the beginning of pubescence at about 593 12 to 14 years of age, the pattern of parent–child relations crystallizes 867 out in the form it will have for the rest of the child's life. Proxy parents and classificatory parents are correctly discriminated and set in proper relation to own parents. Kinship sentiments are finally formed.

[1] But this is not associated with overt signs of 'adolescent instability', nor is there an institutionalized group revolt of adolescents against the generation of the fathers. Cf. my previously cited Memorandum.

4: Fortes and Fortes E-5 (1934-1936) 1936
FE11 Tallensi FE11

243 311 Most compounds also have at their disposal some low-lying alluvial land, (*boog*, valley) suitable for millet or rice. Junior members take up as much as they wish of this, provided it is not required by the head of the compound.

243 596 Reference to the table given previously shows that, on an average, a single unit of food economy is dependent upon the labour of two men and comprises 1·4 households[1] and two primary families. The head of the unit of food economy is entitled to as much assistance as is necessary for the cultivation and harvesting of his compound farms from the junior men, his brothers, sons or nephews belonging to that unit, and to the help of all the women of the unit in sowing and harvesting. He is responsible for the supply of seed, for most of the implements, and he stores the grain in his granaries. In return, all who help him are entitled to share in the produce.

243 596 866 Boys and unmarried young men, dependent upon the wives of the head for cooked food, always assist him in the cultivation of his valley and bush lands. A junior householder need not. If he is ambitious, industrious, or merely planning for the day when he can break away from the control of the head, he cultivates his own bush farm. He supplies his own seed and the produce is his to dispose of as he pleases. Even an adolescent boy may be given a small plot (*sinsiar*) on his father's compound farm to cultivate, the produce of which is absolutely his own. This is one of the ways in which a boy acquires a few chickens and lays the foundations for the economic independence which he gradually reaches in the course of years. Every independent cultivator thus augments the food supply of his own household or family, but not of the whole unit.

244 596 422 This differentiation is even more marked with subsidiary crops, of which the most important is ground-nuts (*sukpaam: arachis hypogea*). The head of a self-supporting unit interplants ground-nuts with his early millet on the compound farm. The crop yielded is his property, though any member of the unit can help himself to some for food. But, in addition, almost every man and boy able to wield a hoe and most adult women have their own ground-nut fields (*sukpalay*). These are made on patches of compound land unsuitable for other crops and

[1] Actually 30 per cent. (28 out of 58) units of food economy have two or more households.

[See cat. 116, p.241 — Analyst.]

5: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937)1938 FE11 Tallensi FE11

across a recently sown field of early millet already a few inches high. I chanced to tread on a shoot. Immediately one of the small boys stooped and carefully raised and replanted the blade of millet. 'Why did you do that?' I asked. 'Don't you know that is our food?' he replied reproachfully.

2. Every small boy of 6–7 years and upwards has a passionate desire to own a hen, and many of them are able to realize this ambition. If you ask a small boy why he wants a hen he will reply in almost the same words as an adult uses to explain the importance of 'things' (*bon*). 'If you have a hen it lays eggs, and you take the eggs and breed chicks, then you can sell the chickens and buy a goat, and when the goat breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a sheep, and when the sheep breeds you can sell its offspring and buy a cow, and then you can take the cow and get a wife.'

3. Maanyeya, a little girl of about 9–10 years, said that she had eaten none of the meat of last night's sacrifice. 'Why?' I asked. 'When they sacrifice to Zukɔk', she explained gravely, 'women don't eat of the meat. If they do, they will never bear any children, they become sterile.' 'What's that to you?' I said. 'Am I not a woman? Who wants to be sterile?' she responded almost indignantly.

4. I was playing with Taɾɔmba and Yindubil (8–9 years), sons of the same joint family, and their friends. We were discussing parents. Taɾɔmba and Yindubil, speaking together, told me the story of the latter's mother. Three or four years ago she had run away from their father to marry another man. They said, in the very words that an adult member of the family would use, speaking seriously: 'She ran away and took our belly [that is, she was pregnant by their father] and went and bore over there, so our child is there. Then she bore another child there. When our child is big enough we will separate it [*pokg*—the technical legal term] and bring it home.' These two were thus identifying themselves completely with the family, mother–child attachments notwithstanding.

Such examples could be multiplied tenfold, but they will suffice at this stage.

The adult attitude about education. Education is not an entirely unwitting process among the Tallensi. They set a high, and indeed overdetermined, value on their culture, and are fully aware of the fact that

5: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937)1938 FE11 Tallensi FE11

867 857 somnolent, sat whimpering as he ate, while some one else commented that if you want your share of food you must be there to receive it.

183 764 The principle of reciprocity which is thus early learnt in association with siblings and age mates is one of the basic moral axioms of Tale social life. If a man refuses to come to the assistance of a neighbour who has invited a collective hoeing party, the latter will retaliate by refusing assistance to the former at a later date. Often at mortuary ceremonies some one, not obliged by custom to do so, will bring an animal to be slaughtered for the dead, 'because when my father died, he brought a sheep to be killed'. A girl of about 10, after her grandmother's funeral, showed me how half her head had been shaved in the customary way. But her spontaneous explanation was: 'Because, at the feast, when they cook the beans they give me a whole dish to myself.' This moral aspect of Tale social relations, as we can now see, explains the rights which increasing economic skill confer upon a boy or a girl. Those who work for you *deserve* their keep.[1]

[854 855] [1] I have not attempted to track the Tale attitudes towards authority and justice to their roots in infant psychology, as would be necessary for an exhaustive analysis. Some of the phenomena which should be observed in this connexion are not accessible to study by the behaviouristic methods of the field worker. But it may be worth mentioning that one can readily observe the constraint and force which, at some times, the affection and indulgence which, at others, are expressed in the way parents treat their infant children. From the day of its birth an infant is subjected to the agonizing ordeal of a daily bath in steaming medicated water which is so hot that it becomes rigid with pain on the first douche. One sees infants of a few days to about 12 months old arbitrarily held down on their mother's laps while medicated drinking water is forcibly poured down their throats as they struggle and splutter. A few minutes after an infant has been treated thus roughly it will be lovingly suckled, fondled, and caressed by mother or sister, or affectionately dandled by its father. A 3-year-old suddenly frightened runs to its father, or more characteristically to its mother to bury its face between her knees, clutching her thighs, or to snatch at the breast. The same 3-year-old, in a fit of temper, will nag, whimper petulantly, strike its mother with its little fists. No one beats an infant for this. The mother tries to soothe it, or patiently calls some one—husband or co-wife—to come and take charge of the unruly child. This indulgence extends to the excretory processes, and to masturbation, which is overt until puberty in boys. Until it is weaned, at about 3—when it can walk—it has very complete possession of its mother. After weaning, which is generally mild, the child becomes more detached from its mother, who now resumes regular intercourse with her husband. At this age, or even younger, children are often playfully threatened by their fathers. 'I will slaughter you if you do so and so', but they always seem to react with complete equanimity to this. Yet a boy of 4–5 years, suspiciously

[966] [839]

5: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937)1938 FE11 Tallensi FE11

system and his or her gradual acquisition of a responsible status in the social structure. By the age of 14 or 15 most girls are already married or being courted in marriage. They take their household duties more lightly perhaps than older women with children, but their childhood education is complete. Their education in the duties and responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood lies outside the scope of this paper. 'To play' now means to join in the dance or to dress up and go to market, there to gossip and flirt. These are recreations merely, like conversation in the evening after a good meal, when the whole family sits or sprawls about in one of the inner courts or in front of the gateway. Such 'play' is educative in quite a different sense to that of childhood.

Boys, too, between the ages of 12 or 13 and 16 to 18 are at the stage of transition from childhood to young manhood. The imaginative play still prominent at the beginning of this period is given up by degrees and usually altogether abandoned when puberty is established. Like the adolescent girl, the boy of 16 or so finds his principal recreation in the dance at certain seasons. He, too, begins to frequent markets when time permits, for he is greatly preoccupied with the opposite sex, with courtship and flirtations and even transient love affairs, and there is no place like the market for pretty girls. An adolescent youth is already applying the deftness and skill acquired in juvenile play or in the arts and crafts of his boyhood to practical ends. A 16-year-old takes an active part in building and thatching and in the manufacture of bows and arrows, or in the practice of crafts like leatherwork or the forging of tools and implements.

The transition from boyhood to manhood can readily be observed in the development of farming interests and skill during this period. The boy of 10 to 12 is extremely keen to plant, hoe and weed. Helping his father, he sows ground-nuts for himself amongst his father's early millet. Frequently he has a small plot of cereals, a few yards square, in a useless corner of one of his father's fields. He hoes and plants and weeds his plot with great energy and zest, though somewhat crudely, borrowing one of his father's discarded hoes for this purpose. He assists his mother to farm her ground-nuts and beans. But his efforts make no difference to the family commissariat or to the care and sustenance given him by his parents. He is still

5: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937)1938 FE11 Tallensi FE11

experimenting without responsibility, though with great earnestness. Two or three years later the play element has vanished. If he cultivates a personal plot he makes an effort to beg land which is agriculturally good, and works with the avowed purpose of obtaining a crop which, though minute compared with the needs of the family, suffices to buy himself a cap or a loin-cloth. The time he can now devote to his own plot or to his own ground-nuts must be adjusted in accordance with his responsibilities as a contributor to the family economy.

With boys, therefore, as with girls, the completion of their childhood education marks the end of childhood play. Mimetic and imaginative experimentation becomes redundant when the individual attains social responsibility and maturity. The play of Tale children changes, as we have seen, *pari passu* with their advancing maturity, contributing at each stage to the elaboration and integration of those interests, skills, and observances the mastery and acceptance of which is the final result of their education.

VI. Synoptic Chart of Educational Development

In conclusion, and in order to bring the preceding analysis of the education of Tale children to a focus, I append a synoptic chart setting out the main trends of the development of their interests and skills as these are reflected in their economic duties and activities, on the one hand, and in their play on the other. The reader will realize that these norms are necessarily crude and approximate. I have not ventured to include observances in the chart, since the trend of their acquisition cannot easily be analysed into approximate stages.

CHART OF DEVELOPMENT

BOYS

Economic Duties and Activities	*Play*
3–6 years	
None at first. Towards end of this period begin to assist in pegging out goats; scaring birds from newly sown fields and from crops; accompany family sowing and harvesting parties; using hoe in quasi-play to glean ground-nuts in company of older siblings.	Exuberant motor and exploratory play. Use mimetic toys (bow, drum, &c.) in egocentric play. Towards end of period social and imaginative play with 'cattle' and 'house-building' commences, often in company of older children of either sex, as well as recreational games and dancing.